THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(*Continued from page* 200.)

LETTER XLVI.

MILLOT's Elements of History may have told you all that was necessary to know of the Milanese and of its capital: I will only observe therefore, that Milan appears to have been a place of importance at a very early period of the Roman republick, to have been afterwards the residence of an Emperour, and to have had its full share of those calamities, which assailed the declining ages of the Empire: it was for sometime a free imperial city, but becoming a prey to the dissensions and jealousy of several powerful citizens, one of these of the house Visconti, was at length acknowledged and admitted as their Sovereign in the twelfth century: it was in virtue of his near connection with this family that Louis the XIIth of France made so many efforts to get possession of the Milanese. He was succeeded in his pretensions by Francis the first, but the battle of Pavia put an end to all such views, and the Milanese remained annexed to the crown of Spain from 1525 to 1706. It has since been divided between the King of Sardinia and the house of Austria, and now forms a separate monarchy, the chief of which has assumed the proud title of King of Italy.

Milan is a large and well built city containing upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants; they appeared to me to be a handsome race of luxurious people, and I saw a great many splendid equipages in the streets and many marks of opulence. We arrived early in the morning of Sunday, and having a valet de place as a guide, went immediately after

to the Cathedral, which nearly fills up one side of a large square; it is an immense building and covered as far as it is finished, with marble. It looks more like a mountain than a church; it was with difficulty we made our way through a crowd in the square. They were collected in groups, and were some of them listening to three ballad singers on a temporary stage, while others were diverted by a puppet show, and others again were attentive to some experiments which a travelling natural philosopher was making with an electrical apparatus. Nothing could be more remote from England and America than such an audience so amused on such a day; there is something too in the Italian countenance, in the Italian expression of any feeling that is far beyond the modes of speech and actions of other nations. It needed not all the pomp and dignity of the Catholick worship to impress the mind with religious awe on entering the Cathedral, which is four hundred and eighty-six feet in length, and broad in proportion. A dome is suspended over head in the centre, at the height of two hundred and fifty-seven feet, and fifty-six columns of ninety feet in length and twenty-six round, seem but of a proportionate size to the mighty mass which they support; four of these columns are of oriental granite, and of a single piece. I am convinced that there are certain ideas which the mind readily admits, and perhaps with a degree of admiration, but of which mere description is very inadequate to convey a proper sense; if the length and breadth of this great Cathedral could be accurately laid down on the lawn before the door, and you could represent to yourself a church like that of St. Michael in Charleston, placed on the pavement, and reaching only to within one hundred feet of what we should call the ceiling in a building of another sort, your imagination would much more easily attain to the idea of greatness I mean to convey; and do but trace a circle of twenty-six feet upon the grass, if you wish to conceive an idea of the size of the columns. There are a number of altars to different Saints along the sides of the Cathedral at which different individuals may be seen offering up their devotions, according, no doubt, to the opinion of the Saint's credit in heaven, or the particular case in human affairs, or the particular disorder in the human body, to which he has most frequently extended his influence in a miraculous manner: you will find in twenty different books, but particularly I believe in Robertson's Charles the fifth, the origin of this worship of Saints, than which nothing, not even the worship of Jupiter and Apollo, appears to me more absurd. If all Saints indeed had the merit of the Hermit in Switzerland, who brought two hostile parties of his fellow-countrymen to listen to reason, when on the point of shedding each other's blood; or of St. Charles Borromeo, who is in a particular manner venerated at Milan, we might smile at it inwardly, but we should respect the exaggerated gratitude of mankind.

The life of this distinguished individual, St. Charles, was but of short duration; but all that could be done by a man for the promotion of good morals, for the discipline of the church, for the encouragement of learning, and for the comfort and protection of the poor and the sick, was effected by

his active and truly religious zeal and humanity. His shrine, which is at the upper end of the Cathedral, is held in the highest veneration: you will find a description in any book of travels through Italy of the ornaments which adorn it, and which I could not approach near enough to examine, on account of a crowd, who seemed in earnest devotion; while a priest was saying mass at a little altar near it; having wandered about the Cathedral for sometime, we ascended the steeple, and surveyed the city, now fortunately relieved of its famous citadel, which is in ruins. The highly cultivated neighbourhood, the various canals, and a long extent of the Alps, and the commencement of the Apennines; Marignan, where Francis the first taught the Swiss that they were not invincible, seemed at our feet, and Pavia, where all was lost except his honour, was visible at a distance, and Rebeck was pointed out to us, Rebeck, where Bayard supported to the last, the superiority of a soldier, who dies fighting for his country, over him who bears arms even successfully against it: a little attention to a book, and to a map I had in my hand, might have enabled me from this elevated situation of four hundred and ten feet above the plain, to trace out also the scene of other distinguished actions, which had taken place during the war of the revolution, but I recede involuntarily from such inquiries, as I do from the death of Charles the Ist, and Louis XVIth in history, and as I remember receding when a schoolboy from that of Hector in the Iliad. The hospital which we next visited is upon a very great and liberal scale: in a long room, the doors of which are thrown open at a certain hour every day, we saw a double row of very clean beds, where the sick appeared to be many of them waited upon by their own children. In the late war, there have been fifteen hundred wounded men here at a time, and here many of these poor victims of ambition breathed their last: they were of all the various nations who were concerned in the contest; they lived, as long as they did live, in great harmony together, and were treated with equal humanity and attention.

I have mentioned to you, what is said of the apparent indifference of the Milanese to what might be the event of the war, but this seemed at any moment to cease, as soon as Fortune had declared herself. To them, the vanquished were always in the wrong,* and they submitted, with cheerfulness almost, to the demands of the conqueror: three hundred pounds (of 12 oz.) of plate were taken from this very hospital, when the French first entered Milan, as were all articles of gold and silver not necessary to the celebration of mass, from all the churches. The convents too were made to contribute very largely, and what had appeared at first but a ferocious rabble of half naked banditti, was converted into a well clothed, well equipped and well paid army. I was glad to find that although several convents had been suppressed, there were still some left, and that those were now safe with their property under the protection of the law. "It may be improper that any young people should be allowed to take the vows, but to a man advanced in life, who has no family,

* Sequitur fortunam ut semper, et odit damnatos.—JUVENAL.

or to a woman who has failed of a settlement in the married state, a convent affords very frequently the best retreat from inutility and want."—*Hume.*

We saw some good sculpture, and a great many good pictures; but I regretted that the talents of such distinguished artists should have been employed upon imaginary miracles and martyrdoms. At night we went to the great opera, for which we had in some measure prepared ourselves by reading the piece that was to be performed, but we by no means expected such a theatre. There were six rows of boxes, of thirty-six in each, besides an extensive pit, and an orchestra where there seemed at least fifty performers. I was delighted to see your——— so well pleased; he has had in some measure, you know, a musical education, and yet confessed, that he had never heard musick before, or had conceived a possibility of such a union of harmony and melody; such sweet voices and such an accompaniment.—The scene changed still more frequently, I observed, than upon the English stage, and the tendency of the audience, with all their taste and sensibility, was rather to encourage buffoonery in the actors, than any other talent. The only actor very much applauded and encored, was one, who, describing in a song the pleasures of a country life, contrived to roar like a bull, to whistle like a bird, and to bleat like a sheep, besides dancing from time to time like a shepherd at a wedding.

The boxes are private property, and only lighted as it may suit the conveniency of those who occupy them, except that which was destined for the royal family, of which none of the illustrious individuals were present upon this occasion; but the box attracted universal admiration, and gave me an idea of that recess in a Chinese palace, where, on particular days, the divine spirit of the emperour is supposed to be present, though his person be at the distance of several leagues.—There was a ballet, and a great deal of dancing in the Italian style, which Arthur Young has very happily described. It was quite a tempest of agility, and not a great way removed from tumbling; the principal man struck his forehead repeatedly with his feet, and the principal woman seemed to take a pleasure and a pride in showing more of her form than I care for describing: the dancing at Bordeaux was decency in comparison. The Italians excel in pantomime, and with their fine eyes, expressive countenances, and extreme agility, are able to convey any meaning in dumb show as if they spoke; but I will venture to assert, that their taste in dancing is false and licentious.

There is a great deal of literature, I am told, both in Milan and Turin, and men of distinguished talents who keep pace with the rest of Europe in the improvement of every art, and the progress of the sciences: of this, however, we were by no means able to judge. I should have liked, had I remained a few days longer in Milan, to have found out the count Castiglione, who travelled through America about seventeen years ago, and has since published two volumes of his travels. His account of the northern states is, I believe, accurate, and did he not exaggerate the horrours of slavery in Carolina, there would not be much to find fault with in that part of his book,

as far as regards the sea-coast; but the people of our upper country would be hardly satisfied with his account of them, and it is a fact, that where man has lost the virtues of the savage life, without having acquired those of civilized society, he is a very disagreeable animal: unfortunately for Virginia, the Count not being able to travel through that State, took what he supposed the best authority, and describes the manners and customs of Virginia from Smyth, who, you know, represents the Virginian, if in good circumstances, as passing the day with hardly any other exertion than a walk to the stable after breakfast, and as stretched upon a matrass with something to drink within his reach during the sultry hours of summer, while one negro servant rubs the soles of his feet, and another keeps the flies off. If this should not appear a very exact description, and perhaps it is not of those immediately about you, let it at least have the effect of putting you upon your guard against every printed account to the prejudice of other countries, and do not let an English traveller persuade you, that because an Italian lady is always attended by a Cicesbeo, she is therefore lost to every idea of virtue and propriety; the morals of Milan are said to be better than those of other parts of Italy, and the hospitality of the great nobility is very much applauded by those who have been in a situation to judge of it.

Your —— and I crept along unknowing and unknown, and could judge only of what we saw; but we passed our time delightfully.

LETTER XLVII.

We passed an hour at the library, which appears well supplied with the best authours in all languages and very well regulated. There is a long table at which as many as choose to read, are furnished with any book they desire, and with the means of making extracts, and the most profound silence is observed: we had no time, as you may suppose, either to read or make extracts, but got into a carriage which was waiting for us, and proceeded to Lodi. You will see in Young, a very just account of the road we passed along, and a very lively description of the effects of good pastures and well understood irrigation; no people indeed, I am told, understand the management and use of water better than the Italians, and it is to this knowledge that the city of Milan and a great extent of country in its neighbourhood is indebted for all the advantages of fertility and commerce. One canal, as you may observe by the map, joins the waters of the Tessin, and another those of the Adda to the city, and a third is prepared to receive the superabundance which may at any time be occasioned by sudden rains, and conduct it, so as to render it of service.

Our object in going to Lodi, was to visit the bridge which gives name to an action, that took place there between the French and the Austrians in 1797, and which decided the fate of the campaign: notwithstanding the success of the French on several occasions, and the pusillanimity of the smaller powers of Italy, who were beginning to offer up to their invader those resources which might have afforded them the means of honourable defence; the Piedmontese were still numerous, and a well appointed army of the Austrians holding the left of the Adda rendered the possession of Milan in-

secure to the French; it was an object with Bonaparte therefore to force the bridge of Lodi, which crosses the Adda at a place where the river is about two hundred yards broad, the breadth of the bridge is about ten; a battery of cannon commanded the whole length of it by a raking fire, while other batteries above and below, threatened destruction to any force that should attempt to cross. It would have been wiser however, in the Austrian general to have cut the bridge, or to have placed a fire-ship under it. Without losing a moment, though it was late in the evening when he arrived at Lodi, Bonaparte thinking as Cæsar would have thought, that nothing was done, while anything remained to be effected, ordered the passage to be attempted, and a column of the French headed by the principal general officers of their army, persevering after a moment's hesitation under a deadly fire,—this most singular instance of military enthusiasm and audacity was crowned with complete success. The Austrians were driven from their batteries, the Piedmontese army lost all spirit of resistance, and the people of Italy as if awaking from a dream of many ages at the cry of liberty, aided the arms of France in overturning the government of their different Sovereigns: we now know what that promised liberty ended in; that all the powers of Italy, except the Neapolitan dominion, and a part of the Venetian territory are become, though under various names, but mere appendages to France, and that this interesting country, after having been ravaged by contending armies, having been deprived of thousands of its youth, and despoiled of its treasures, and of those precious remains of antiquity, which had escaped the rapacity of former conquerors, is as remote from liberty as in the days of Augustus. If liberty alone were all that the neighbourhood of Rome had been deprived of in a lapse of ages, there might be no great cause of regret; liberty cannot exist without laws, it is like a sword in unskilful hands, which is upon many occasions more dangerous than useful to the holder: but the wretched inhabitants of Campania, are the prey of hunger and disease, and that coast which was once covered with shady groves and beautiful gardens, and the country houses of opulent citizens is now a naked and frightful solitude; this however, I must observe to you, arises chiefly from the defects of the Papal government, which has long been in all the decrepitude of decline, and has not been awakened to a proper sense of its interests by the losses and sufferings of the late revolutionary war. The same impunity in cases of assassination prevails, and the same neglect of all method in the relief of the real poor, who are thus deprived of that assistance which is lavished upon a numerous race of active beggars.

In the days of Roman greatness, Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber, was a city of eighty thousand souls, where valetudinarians repaired in numbers for the advantages of bathing and sea air, the banks of the river on the way to Rome were covered with villas, and on the neighbouring island, which was formed by the branches of the Tiber where it falls into the sea, and which was known by the venerable appellation of the Sacred Island, was the temple of Apollo, in whose honour there were games celebrated every five years: these games consisted of races on foot,

in chariots, on horses, and in barges on the river, and we may well imagine, that nothing which taste could design, or a profusion of wealth could execute, was wanting to render them attractive and magnificent. The traveller on his way to Ostia, now enters into a perfect desert at a short distance from Rome, and finds no house but a single miserable inn during the whole of the remaining twenty or twenty-two miles; he then beholds an enclosure of ancient and lofty walls, where four or five houses with two towers in ruins form a square with a church in the middle, and that, he is told, is Ostia, the inhabitants of which are the keepers of two or three drinking houses, and the wretched soldiers who guard the still more wretched galley-slaves; to complete this scene of wretchedness, the authour from whom I derive the account I now give you, and whom I have the advantage to be acquainted with, says, that the town and the neighbourhood were infested when he was there, by mad dogs, and that the people could not be persuaded to shoot such as had been bit; one had nothing to do, they said, but to make an incision upon a dog's head in the form of a cross, as soon as he began to sicken, and there was not the least danger of his going mad. What think you of such a residence as Ostia, amid the clinking of chains of galley-slaves, joined to pestilence and famine, and mad dogs and superstition? The change of appearance on the Sacred Island is little better than what has taken place at Ostia; a solitary house protects the herdsmen who have the care of the cattle that graze upon it, and one of the vaults of the ruined temple of Apollo serves as a dairy. In an extent of a hundred leagues square, there are hardly so many inhabitants, nor as many families in the whole extent of ancient Latium, as there were formerly different tribes, and you will be grieved to think, that these poor remains of the human race, have no other subsistence than bread, which is brought from Rome, and raw herbs: a young man of eighteen who acted as guide to Mr. de Boustetten, whose work has furnished me with the details I have given you, being invited to partake of the dinner that was carried in a basket, said that he knew that what he was helped to, was meat, for he had eaten some once before. In continuing his walk along the coast, Mr. de Boustetten discovered what he supposed to be the ruins of the villa of Pliny, or of Hortensius, and paints in very strong colours the melancholy contrast which is exhibited by the silence and desolation of the present scene compared with that which Pliny has left us a description of: another authour, whose works I shall mention to you more particularly hereafter, (Chateaubriand) has given a description of the neighbourhood of Rome, which I despair of doing justice to in a translation: it is contained in a letter to a friend, and composed in a style which religion and the spirit of poetry seem to have inspired and adorned. "A growth of withered grass, which the eye of the traveller easily mistakes for the promises of a plentiful harvest, very frequently conceals the traces of some ancient road, but no modern path bespeaks the haunt of men: no labourers are seen at work, no flocks and herds are wandering at large, hardly a tree gives variety to the scene, which is made up of ruined acqueducts and tombs, with here and

there a miserable house either deserted altogether, or guarded by some poor wretch a prey to poverty and fever: one might suppose, that no nation had dared to occupy the fields which had been cultivated by the masters of the world, or that the denunciations of the prophet Isaiah against Babylon and Tyre, were here exemplified against the Campania of Rome. It is in the midst of this sad scene, this extent of dreary and inhospitable wilds, that the immortal city presents itself, a city which has twice and for a lapse of ages governed mankind, which has survived so many vicissitudes, and which now in its decline gives rise to recollections that elevate the mind of the beholder, and warm his heart to pity."

It was unpleasant, now that we were in Italy, to turn our backs upon Rome and Naples, but circumstances did not admit of our being much longer from Geneva, and it was your ———'s consolation as it was mine, that it would probably be in his power to visit these interesting places hereafter; an attachment to Rome is one of the earliest passions of a schoolboy's mind, and Italy is what first attracts his attention in a map of Europe: we all know to how many calamities Italy has been exposed, and what indignities have been heaped upon the venerable city by the barbarians of every age; but there are some circumstances attending the late war in this ill-fated country, so singular in themselves, and so little known, that I must digress a little longer in order to bring you acquainted with them.

While Bonaparte was amusing himself with preparing and publishing edicts which were to form the minds, and to soften the manners of the Egyptians, Suwaroff had overrun Italy in a single campaign; the different posts which the French had occupied in the Roman and Neapolitan States, either surrendered to a motley army of British marines and Russian and Turkish soldiers, or capitulated with the British Commodore who commanded on the coast; a Turkish fleet sailed up the Adriatick for the protection of the inhabitants and the Pope was guarded by a regiment of British light-horse: the Neapolitan court, meanwhile, which had retired to Palermo, was doing its utmost to overset the Parthenopeian republick, where the inhabitants of the capital were known to be sick of French fraternity, while those of the country had been pillaged and tormented in order to supply the wants of the French army: as the people of Calabria had never been brought to admit the French into their country, it was among them that the Cardinal Ruffo first showed himself; he was the agent of the court, was invested with full powers for that purpose, and availed himself of the ignorance, the enthusiasm, and courage of the Calabrians like a man of genius: five persons were dressed and tutored for the purpose of representing the Princes of the royal family, and as they were liberal in their promises of future promotion in the state and army, while the Cardinal and the Priests who joined him, undertook for the next world, it was no difficult matter to collect an army: in addition to the nobility and gentry who offered their services on the occasion, were persons of every possible description, every assassin who had his peace to make with heaven and the King, was a good recruit, and a celebrated robber, an apostate Priest,

known throughout the country by the name of Fratre Diavolo, presented himself with five hundred of his followers before his eminence, and was considered as a very acceptable accession. The royal cause now bore down every thing before it, Naples was taken, the royal government reestablished, and numbers of those unfortunate persons, who had been any way connected with the temporary republick, were made to pay the penalty of their rashness: there are circumstances in this part of the narration I have before me, not so honourable to Lord Nelson, but the Tragedy ended in a Farce, which is worth relating. On the list of the proscribed there was placed (you will be astonished to hear it,) the name of St. Januarius himself, the great Patron Saint of Naples, whom you must have become acquainted with in Moore's travels, if you had never heard of him before; he was accused of having been passive at least in the late revolution, and of having permitted the usual liquefaction of his blood, while the rebels were in possession of the King's palace. As no one appeared to make any defence for this holy personage, though a reasonable time was allowed for the purpose, he was declared convicted; his property, that is to say, the ornaments of the Cathedral and of the great altar, were declared forfeited to the crown; he was deposed from his station of Patron Saint of Naples, his blood to remain congealed forever, no miracles of his to be admitted of, and it was announced that the vows of the nation collectively were hereafter to be addressed to St. Antony of Padua: I know a Lady who was present and saw St. Antony take possession of his new dignity: around the Saint's body and under his feet, were placed a number of those ropes, which it was said the republicans had prepared to bind the royalists with, had it not been for his powerful intercession with heaven; and at every house by which the procession passed the inhabitants were careful how they neglected to have an offering of flowers and of some piece of plate ready to lay at the Saint's feet.

You will find somewhat similar to the description of St. Januarius in Hume's History of England; where he describes the vengeance of Henry the eighth, as exercised against the Papal power in the person of St. Thomas of Canterbury: this Saint who owed his canonization to the zealous defence he made of the Apostolick See against Henry the second, had kindled by his repeated miracles, such a flame of devotion at Canterbury, as to efface the adoration of the virgin and even of the Deity: he was now however cited to appear in court as if he had been a common person, was tried and condemned as a traitor, his name was struck off the list of Saints, his shrine was pillaged, his remains which had been held sacred for near four hundred years, were burnt, and his ashes were scattered in the air. One could hardly have expected that a scene so similar would be repeated in the eighteenth century.

The events which took place at Rome were neither so absurd nor so tragical, but it would have grieved the most bigoted Presbyterian to have seen the venerable head of the Roman church, at the age of eighty-two, carried a prisoner from place to place till the hour of his death. And what are we to think of the part which his successour has been made to

act? The Papal power however, though shorn of its beams, has been reestablished, and all those prophecies about the fall of the great Babylon, which were thought to be accomplished are put off to another century.

The ultimate success of the French in Italy has been great and decisive: it has arisen from their superiour numbers, from the great improvements which have been made in the conveyance and management of artillery, from the discovery of the Telegraph, and from the perfection to which the Science of practical Geography has been carried: large bodies of men stretched across an extent of many leagues, have been brought to bear with wonderful precision upon any one point, and the great mass has been animated by one soul under the direction of a very superiour genius: how far the arts of peaceful life have been promoted, or how the happiness of individuals have been affected, I cannot pretend to say. In making himself Emperour of France and King of Italy, Bonaparte has devested the executive authority of one most powerful instrument, which he and and his predecessours in command had wielded with great effect: the charm of imaginary liberty is at an end, the spell is broken, he will have numbers, and courage, and military knowledge at his command, but he will never have again the advantage of that enthusiasm which has done such wonders in Italy, and which at the commencement of the revolution, when worked upon by the more than mortal sounds of the Marseilloise Hymn could alone render a French army invincible.

If any part of Italy has been benefited by the revolutionary war, it is the republick of Genoa, which has at length been annexed to the French empire: it must be mortifying no doubt, to loose that political existence which had lasted for so many centuries, and frequently with all the splendour of successful war, and foreign conquests; but dragged into every dispute of France with England, exposed to the depredations of the powers of Barbary, and cut off from the means of internal trade by a line of French custom-house officers, the change for the better, in the situation of this miserable republick, is evident to every one. Marseilles is said to be no gainer at the establishment of a powerful rival so near, but the complaints of a single town, or indeed of a department, are of little importance in the contemplation of him, who regulates all things by the opinion, and sometimes by the caprice of the moment.

For The Port Folio.

MISCELLANY.

At the time, when Lord Lyttleton, the younger, was alternately plunged in the vortex of business, rambling in the gardens of Epicurus or glittering in the zenith of fashion, there was scarcely a man of wit and colloquial powers in the higher circles of life, who was not in habits of intimacy with that shining, imposing, seductive nobleman. It is an atrocious calumny to assert that Lyttleton had few companions but the profligate and the base. It is true that many latitudinarians in principle were admitted into his private orgies; and in the recesses of a rural dell, or in the coffeehouses at the west end, a chirping songster or a mere buffoon might be tolerated to while away the idle hour. But though a *Chase Price*, or a gambling *Foley*, or a Capt. O'Brien might occasionally partake of his midnight carousal, yet Lyttleton, from the better impulses of his genius and taste habitually preferred men, who like Topham, Beauclerc, or Charles Fox, could burnish their excesses with the polish of urbanity, and if they were as profligate as Falstaff, could be as witty too. Among such of his companions, who *mingled mirth with mind*, was the Hon. Mr. Damer, who

was distinguished by all the gifts of nature and fortune, and whom a fine genius, aided by an excellent education, foreign travel, and the most pleasing powers of conversation placed in the front rank of his fashionable contemporaries. This extraordinary young man by running too swiftly towards Pleasure's goal, at length became quite out of breath, and having exhausted a plentiful patrimony, became so involved in the gloom of despair, that he committed the act of suicide with circumstances of such strange preparation as deserves to be recorded in the following narrative. It is an exquisite moral lesson.

Another circumstance, says Lord Lyttleton, of a very different nature, occurs to me from the recollection of that day's pleasure. Poor *John Damer* was one of the company. He has made a strange exit in a strange manner. We were at Eton and in Italy together, and at subsequent periods in the habits of friendly connexion. Few of those, who knew him have been more gloomily affected by the melancholy event than myself. Despair, as it arises from very different and opposite causes, has various and distinct appearances. It has its rage, its gloom, and its indifference; and while under the former, its operations acquire the name of madness, under the latter it bears the title of philosophy. Poor John Damer was no philosopher, and yet he seems to have taken his leap in the dark with the marks both of an Epicurean and a Stoick. He acted his part with coolness, and sought his preparation in the mirth of a brothel.

As example, says a popular writer, teaches more effectually than precept, and curiosity is more alive to recent facts than to remote illustrations, I shall here relate the history of a man of family and fashion, who, a few years since, shot himself in London; from which it will appear that possessed even of the best feelings of the heart, men may be rendered extremely miserable by suffering their principles to be corrupted by the practice of the world.

The Hon. Mr. Damer, the eldest son of Lord Milton, was five and thirty years of age, when he put a period to his existence, by means perfectly correspondent to the principles on which he had lived. He was married to a rich heiress, the daughter-in-law of Gen. Conway. Nature had endowed him with extraordinary talents; but a most infatuated fondness for excessive dissipation obscured the brightest faculties of his mind, and perverted many of the faculties of his heart. His houses, his carriages, his horses, and his liveries surpassed in splendour and magnificence everything sumptuous and costly, even in the superb and extravagant metropolis of Great Britain. The fortune he possessed was great; but the variety of lavish expenditures in which he engaged exceeded his income, and he was at length reduced to the necessity of borrowing money. He raised, in different ways, nearly forty thousand pounds, the greater part of which he employed, with improvident generosity, in relieving the distresses of his less opulent companions; for his heart overflowed with tenderness and compassion: but this exquisite sensibility, which was ever alive to the misfortunes of others, was, at length, awakened to his own embarrassed situation, and his mind, driven by the seemingly irretrievable condition of his affairs, to the utmost verge of despair. Retiring to a common brothel, he sent for four women of the town, and passed several hours in their company with apparent good spirits and unincumbered gayety; but when the dead of night arrived, he requested them, with visible dejection to retire; and immediately afterwards drawing from his pocket a pistol, which he had carried about him the whole afternoon, blew out his brains. It appeared that he had passed the evening with these women in the same manner as he had been used to pass many others with different women of the same description, without demanding favours, which they would most willingly have granted, and only desiring, in return for the money he had lavished upon them, the dissipation of their discourse, or at most, the ceremony of a salute, to divert the sorrow that preyed on his tortured

mind. But the gratitude he felt for the temporary oblivion, which these intercourses afforded, sometimes ripened into feelings of the warmest friendship. A celebrated actress of the London theatre, whose conversations had already drained him of considerable sums of money, requested of him, only three days before his death, to send her five-and-twenty guineas. At that moment, he had only ten guineas about him; but he sent her, with an apology for his inability to comply immediately with her request, all he had, and soon after borrowed the remainder of the money, and sent it to her without delay. This unhappy young man, shortly before the fatal catastrophe, had written to his father, and disclosed to him the distressed situation he was in; and the night, the very night on which he terminated his existence his affectionate parent, the good Lord Milton arrived in London, for the purpose of discharging all the debts, and arranging the affairs of his unhappy son.

CRITICISM.

For The Port Folio.

MR. OLDSCHOOL,

Your correspondent W. R. S. or S. has criticised the version from Hafiz in the style of a gentleman. But he must feel that some of his objections border upon cavil.

Boy, quick bring the goblets, and fill them with wine,
With sparkling wine, till no more they will hold.

(These lines were still more defective in the manuscript; Mr. O. was kind in correcting them.) S. observes that the word *sparkling* is forced into three syllables to help the measure: we acknowledge the impropriety;—but the alleged tautology is not so glaring as S. would have it appear; at least it is supported by very convenient and unimpeachable authority. S. gives the hint of citation from his own version: we will then adduce,

Again *fill* to the sparkling goblet's *brim*
Or as he misquotes,
Once more the sparkling cup *fill* to the *brim*.

These lines justify Carlos, but they are no honour to the authour's skill in versification.

We do not coincide with S. in the signification he apparently ascribes to the word "*maladies*" as used in the prose translation of the Gazel. He appears to understand it as, *distempers of the body*. We observe the reasonable construction, and consider it to intend those maladies of the heart which wine is supposed to cure. Hafiz says "wine cures the maladies of young and old;" the maladies alluded to are those of the heart: therefore,

'Tis wine heals the hearts of the young and the old.

But turn your microscope to *this*, Mr. S., your own version of the same passage,

And wine is remedy for every ill.

Here is announced the most stupendous of all human discoveries. Let S. be praised: for *Hafiz* never had the least presentiment that wine would ever prove a remedy for EVERY ILL—physical and moral; no exception is made! this idea fills the mind; there is no niche for 'important secrets,' or 'curious phenomena.' Why did not S. administer his omnipotent nostrum to the ode he has made so *ill*? here is a liberal range for ridicule; and we shall presently find that this is not the only one opened in the standard version: but we will not fill the pages of The Port Folio with that which when exceeding defensive retort, can have no other actuating motive than malice.

The wine and the cup, are the sun and the moon;
To the arms of the moon, O! then let him retire.

If the first of these lines be decided tame, surely S. has made a tame translation of the French Treatise by Sir W. Jones. The trite expressions 'bright god of day' and 'pale fac'd-orb of night,' might have been fastened on without conjuration. If the want of compound epithets, and such flaunting titles as these, constitute

tameness, then the line is tame; and so is "GOD said let there be light, and there was light." If monosyllables be necessarily tame, what will you say to this:

Haste bring the moon that she may with *us* shine,

(i. e. shine in conjunction with us.) If retaining the original expression be tameness; Carlos must plead guilty. If the naked original metaphor be tame; either Hafiz or his "spirited" translator must be culpable 'to a degree.' S. should have given this as a standard of tameness.

A cure for lover's pain is in them found.

In the second of the lines Carlos has varied the conceit in some measure.

S. is guilty of an impropriety when he ushers the 'bright god of day' into an Oriental song. *Perhaps* Hafiz had never perused 'Ovid' in all his life; and did not even suspect the sun to be no less a personage than Apollo, 'God of day,' &c. S. was almost as bold in this unceremonious introduction, as Carlos was in supposing that there might be a *male* nightingale! however, we will not apostrophize. Is the 'poor' bird considered as masculine, feminine or *neuter* in the fable of the Nightingale and Rose! Eastern authority is of some little force here; even in opposition to Ovid's Metamorphoses.

The rose droops *his* head in the fervour of day.

We are superlatively unhappy in disappointing our critick, but it is necessary to suggest that the anomaly he observes in this line appears, by the original sketch, to be of the species vulgarly termed a mistake of the Press. Here is room for a doleful apostrophe.

S. is sincerely thanked for his grammatical criticisms, and the manner in which they are conveyed.

In the 'dipping experiment' Carlos stands convicted of a highly criminal abberation.

Did S. never understand the species of metaphor exemplified here, "The work is honourable to his head?" Is it not allowable in this figure to say 'bosom' instead of the heart contained in the bosom? Is not expansion of heart said to be an effect of musick acting on the sense? Is it not within license to say, in this instance 'the bosom expands?'

To the musick of glasses your bosoms expand.

Mr. Oldschool, will not this line pass the ordeal of criticism without much damage?

We long to see friend S. embark on the ocean of metaphysical disquisition: but in the words of Dr. Caustick, "however honoured we should feel, on all other occasions with his worship's company, after wishing his good worship a stiff breeze we must beg leave to be off."

That so lady-like an instrument as the lute should *ring*, is a '*curious* phenomenon' indeed. Let the sagacious S. introduce himself to the nearest organ, and but strike on its side, perhaps the phenomenon will recur. The same wonderful effect may proceed from the lute when swept by the hand of a master. Hafiz says, "Do not afflict thyself with the alteration of fortune, but be attentive to the harmony of the lute." Carlos renders it thus, concisely and correctly, notwithstanding the little cavil on fate and fortune;

Mourn not for a moment the changes of fate,
But hear the lute ring with a masterly hand.

"Musick, the fiercest grief can charm,
"And *Fate's* severest rage disarm." POPE.

The same sentence of Hafiz is eked out by S. to four lines, thus:

Should Fortune frown, *who once appear'd thy friend,*

Is this redundancy to be entitled elucidation, ornament, or mere expletive? Observe the rule laid down by S. against 'superfluous distension:'

And deaf to prayers, refuse thy fervent suit.

(i. e. who not hearing thy prayer, refuses, &c.) This is a doubly useful line, it fills up an hiatus, and makes a rhyme.

Cast every grief aside, and *then* attend
The sound harmonious of the well-strung lute.

Here S. virtually denies to musick her "prime attribute," that of alleviating sorrow. He will not suffer her to apply a "soft assuasive voice,"

And "when the soul is press'd with cares,
"Exalt her in enliv'ning airs." POPE.

The intimated disapprobation of the license assumed in the line "I shall kiss, &c." is too puerile to deserve an answer, however, that license is one of those designated as 'predominant faults.' The ninth stanza of Hafiz, Carlos has omitted, and we do not wish it restored.

It is complained that 'Carlos comprizes the whole *sentiment* of the last verse of Hafiz in one line,' whereas, S. exhibits it 'distended' to four. This though designed for censure is honourable praise. The *whole stanza* except "Once more bring full cups," is without any compression in the least degree injurious, comprehended in the sole line,

And Hafiz will drink if allowed or forbidden.

Until the brevity of which Carlos is accused, shall be proved to exclude an original ornament, or to obscure an original idea, we shall suppose that brevity to be commendable.

Were we in retaliation disposed to animadvert methodically on every passage in the version by S. some harmless lines might be found, deserving of nothing more than the "charity of silence." We should disdain to use the Shandean penknife for the laudable purpose of scratching them into deformity. But let S. attempt to scratch a little sense into this line,

Let roses fade, their beauties will not *dwell*.

Or rhythm into this,

Again fill to the sparkling goblet's brim.

In this line the cæsural pause must fall at the close of the first, or in the middle of the second foot. The painful effect of such an irregularity is not much alleviated by the succeeding division of the line. These asperities of sound might have been avoided; for instance, if, instead of misquoting the line thus,

Once more the sparkling cup fill to the brim,

he had cited it,

Again the bowl "replenish to the brim."

We do not "haunt Parnassus but to please the ear," however, neither tearing a word of two syllables into three, as *spark-el-ing*, nor such barbarous lines as the above can presume to expect toleration. The remaining three lines of the same verse, are rather tautological, 'Heed not the censor,' 'approve or disapprove,' 'forbidden or allowed.'—A version of the identical passage, which is rendered by Carlos in one line.

The surest remedy *my friends* e'er found was wine.

This is 'dull prose.' In reading it the contraction *e'er* cannot be made to sustain a just emphasis without an exertion which destroys the melody. This inelegancy would have been eluded and the original more faithfully represented thus 'compressed,'

In wine the only remedy was found.

But no more of versification. Does S. convey the 'full force and meaning of his authour, here,

Forget they wither, for the wine we pour
Can all the roses of the world excel.

Excel in what? Does S. transfuse his authour's ideas into rhyme unenervated by superfluity? Let the reader collate them; and at the close of every verse he will decide in the negative. S. distinguishes *three* lines with the decisive epithets 'prosaick, dull and tame.' Unfortunately the ode produced as a criterion is in almost every stanza 'tame, prosaick, and dull,' to that ode we transfer the terms as characteristick.

When we read,

Haste bring the moon that she may with us shine,

We recollect,

That "ten low words oft creep in one dull line."

We advise S. to commit this couplet to memory;

"Let such teach others who themselves excel,

"And censure freely who have written well."

In criticism we expect candour; in criticism on the lines of a youth we look for favour; but when a writer undertakes to compare his own stanzas with those of that youth, we demand candour, favour, and the most delicate impartiality. When such examiner seems incapable of perceiving faults, we pity his want of discernment: but when he intimates that all on one side is beauty, and all on the other deformity; we despise him as disingenuous. Such a critick throws a *carte blanche* for retort, into the hand of the criticised.

For all those strictures which we conceive to be liberally just we again express gratitude. The inaccuracies observed in the pieces signed Carlos will even to S. appear less reprehensible when informed that the writer is an uneducated youth of the "Western wilderness," three hundred miles remote from the sublime Pennsylvanian metropolis. As this is the first time he ever ventured forth in prose, and as he is now no intruder, the editor and the reader will readily pardon the crudities of his style.

CARLOS.

BIOGRAPHY.

THOMAS PARNELL, D. D.

The Parnells were a family long seated at Congleton, in Cheshire. The poet's father having been much attached to the republican form of government, found it convenient to remove to Ireland after the restoration: and this fact will account for his son's being born in Dublin in 1679, where he received his education. His progress in learning at Dublin college was rapid. In 1700 he became master of arts, and was soon after ordained a deacon by dispensation from the bishop of Derry, being then under the canonical age. In about three years he was made a priest; and in 1705, Dr. Ashe, bishop of Clogher, gave him the archdeaconry of that see. Eloquent and persuasive in his sermons, he gained great celebrity as a preacher, and seemed on the point of becoming one of the heads of the church. Dr. Parnell was happy in his marriage with the amiable Miss Ann Minchin. He was blessed with an income equal to his wants, having obtained a stall, with the rich vicarage of Findglas, worth 400*l.* and he was patronised by the great, and beloved by the best geniuses of the age—but happiness is as fleeting as the wind. His two only sons died; their afflicted mother, and his much beloved wife followed them to a premature grave; and, in the true language of party, he was loaded with the epithet of trimmer, for having joined queen Anne's last ministry: so that he saw the termination of his rising hopes in the accession of George I. Wine was resorted to; a specious friend in the beginning, but always an enemy in the end. After enjoying his last preferment but one year, he sunk into the arms of death at Chester, in July, 1717, and in his 38th year, when preparing to embark for his native land. We cannot but lament that so pleasing and instructive a writer should be so early lost to the world, who was better calculated for prosperity than adversity; but his disappointment and his real griefs were great. He who could be beloved by a Swift and a Pope, and praised by a Goldsmith, must have had great merit: he who was singled out in a crowd by a lord high treasurer at his levee, and particularly noticed there, might justly feel a consciousness of merit, which, however flattering, does not appear to have led him to the commission of a single impropriety. Johnson points out the authours from whose works he copied; but it should be remembered that a good copyist is far better than a poor original. Where he did not borrow, he is a very respectable writer, but does not stand in the first rank of poets. He left an only child, a daughter, who long survived him.

THE NATIVE COT.

Though with a firm undaunted heart
The sailor quits each dearest tie,
Yet at the signal to depart
A tear unbidden gems his eye!
To grief a foe, he wipes it soon,
Nor sighs nor murmurs at his lot:
Yet fond remembrance, morn and noon,
Will dwell upon his native cot!

And, when he ploughs the distant seas,
Whether on deck he takes his stand,
Or shifts the sail, to catch the breeze,
Or lends to heave the log a hand;
Still fancy, faithful to her post,
On scenes like these will linger not,
But flies with speed to that lov'd coast
Where friends adorn his native cot.

He, does the mighty tempest lower,
Should boiling torrents round him dash,
Should lightnings dart from heaven's high tower,
And waring waves the vessel lash;
At such a moment, fill'd with awe,
As all survey the dread upshot,
He cries (and thence can comfort draw),
"No storms assail my native cot!"

And when to meet the haughty foe,
He steers where deep-mouthed cannons roar,
Though the next shot may lay him low,
Far distant from his much lov'd shore,
He shouts regardless of his life,
While round the battle rages hot,
"I fight to shield from war and strife
My friends, my home, my native cot!"

He still wherever doom'd to rome,
Whether to India or the Pole,
With thoughts of absent friends and home
Can steer and animate his soul;
And as, in every clime, we find
The magick needle vary not,
Ev'n so the compass of his mind
Points ever to his native cot.

Ah! hear him now, all dangers past,
His wife and children smiling near,
Declare how largely heaven, at last,
Hath recompens'd each pang and tear!
His perils he recounts aloud,
And all his troubles are forgot,
When faithful friends around him crowd
And seat him in his native cot.

EPIGRAM.

TO AN OFFICIOUS FRENCHMAN.

Since, bending ever o'er my chair,
Politeness bids you laugh and chatter,
I wish politeness would forbear,
Spluttering, my dinner to be bespatter!

SYNONYME.

Cried Nell to her spouse, with a tongue quite in glee,
"Still, 'twixt export and transport no difference I see!"
"No difference, my dear! could I see you exported—
"Excuse me!—but Oh! I should then be transported!"

MERRIMENT.

A stupid story, or idea, will sometimes make one laugh more than wit. I was once removing from Berkeley-square to Strawberry-hill, and had sent off all my books, when a message unexpectedly arrived, which fixed me in town for that afternoon. What to do? I desired my man to rummage for a book, and he brought me an old Grub-street thing, from the garret. The authour, in sheer ignorance, not humour, discoursing on the difficulty of some pursuit, said, "that even if a man had as many lives as a cat; nay, as many lives as one PLUTARCH is said to have had, he could not accomplish it." This *quid pro quo* surprised me into vehement laughter.

Lady —— is fond of stupid stories.—She repeats one of a Welch scullion-wench, who, on hearing the servants speak of new moons, asked, gravely, what became of all the OLD moons.

A certain poet and player, remarkable for his impudence and cowardice, happening many years ago to have a quarrel with Mr. Powel, another player, received from him a smart box on the ear. A few days after, the former having lost his snuff-box, was making strict inquiry if any body had seen his box. "What," said another of the theatrical punsters, "that which George Powel gave you the other night?"

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